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READING FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.—PART III

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The six reading-lessons in this and the January number complete the series outlined in the October issue. Five are stories taken from Stanley Waterloo's "Story of Ab," published by Doubleday, McClure & Co., New York. These are not continuous, being Nos. 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of a series of these adaptations. The remainder, Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 5, were published in this journal, January, 1907.

It is with every apology that these are offered, and only in appreciation of the fine literary quality and dramatic element in the original were they ever attempted. These very elements are the qualities to be desired in even the beginnings of reading for little children, because they give a motive sufficient for, and a value equivalent to, the immense effort which a child puts into his first reading. Therefore with no desire for originality, and only a hope of retaining something of Mr. Waterloo's spirit and so much of his forceful phrasing as the demand for simplicity would allow, these sketches were constructed.

To use them isolated from the original text would be deplorable. The plan is to read Mr. Waterloo's story to the children sufficiently so that they get into the spirit of the thing. Then instead of reading, or before reading, one of these incidents or situations, such as "Meeting a Hyena," "Old Mok," etc., the children are given one of these adapted sketches to read.

The desire to know more of a story which they have gotten into furnishes motive for reading, the rapid action and short sentences adapt them to children's ability, but they are valuable only because suggestive of the larger, richer background which the original story holds.

The "Story of Zitkala-Sä" is taken in much the same way

from her own article published some years ago in the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled, "The Story of My Indian Girlhood." In reading the article I was anxious that children should get that sense of first-hand knowledge given as simply and picturesquely as Zitkala-Sä herself gives it, and to that end the following is retold, using wherever possible the language and phrasing of the original.

THE STORY OF ZITKALA-SÄ

A tepee of weather-stained canvas stood at the foot of some hills.

A path led gently downward to a broad river.

Here morning, noon, and evening my mother came to draw water.

Always when my mother started I stopped my play to run along with her.

I was a wild little girl of seven.

I wore a slip of brown buckskin.

I was light footed, with a pair of soft moccasins on my feet.

During the summer my mother built her fire in the shadow of our tepee.

In the early morning our breakfast was spread on the grass west of the tepee.

My mother would sit by the fire and toast the dry meat.

It smelled good as it toasted.

I sat upon my feet near her eating my dried meat with bread and drinking strong coffee.

We were alone at breakfast.

At noon anyone who happened to be passing, stopped and ate with us.

But I loved best the evening meal.

That was the time the old stories were told.

When the sun hung low my mother sent me to invite the old men and women to eat supper with us.

I ran all the way to their tepees.

When I reached the door I said, "My mother says you are to come to our tepee this evening."

"Yes, yes, gladly I shall come," each replied.

I ran back skipping and jumping.

I told my mother, "Yes, yes, gladly they will come."

When they came I sat close to my mother.

We sat around the open fire.

When we finished eating, each in turn told a story.

I put my head on my mother's lap, and lay flat on my back and listened.

I watched the stars as they peeped out, one by one.

The old people said funny things and we all laughed.

Then we heard the wolves howl.

I was frightened, and got into my mother's lap.

She put more sticks on the open fire.

Then the bright flames leaped up higher.

I saw the faces of the old folks as they sat around in a great circle.

An old woman was telling a long story.

I fell asleep before the story was finished.¹

¹The stories which this daughter of the Dakotas heard are retold by herself in *Old Indian Legends*, retold by Zitkala-Sä, published by Ginn & Co.

MEETING A HYENA

It was a long, long time ago that a little brown baby lay asleep in a forest.

He lay on a bed of leaves under a beech tree.

When he awoke he began to cry.

His mother ran to him and tossed him in her arms.

He crowed and laughed and kicked his feet.

Suddenly she heard a sound.

She listened.

Then with her baby, she leaped and climbed into the beech tree above her.

She reached its high branches just in time.

Below her rushed a horrible wild beast.

It snarled and smelled the ground as it ran.

It was a dirty brown color, striped with a lighter brown.

It had a black nose like the snout of a hog.

Great fangs stuck out of its jaws.

I was a hyena hunting for food.

It was well that the mother and baby were safe in the tree.

There in the tree the mother laughed as the wild beast leaped toward them.

She knew that they were safe but her baby, little Ab, was hungry.

So she sent a strange call through the forest.

A call came in answer.

Again and again she called.

Nearer and nearer came the answer.

Soon the father came in sight.

He was not walking on the ground but swinging from branch to branch along the tree tops.

He knew by the call that there was danger below.

When he reached the beech tree he swung down beside the other two.

In his belt was a great stone axe.

He saw the hyena leaping below.

He too laughed at the wild beast.

He too knew that they were safe in the tree, but it was time to go home.

So he broke a great limb from the tree.

With this club he struck the beast as it leaped upward.

Then he swung down from the tree and killed the hyena with his stone axe.

Now they were safe.

Father and mother and baby went off through the forest to their home in the cave.

OLD MOK

As Ab grew older a little brother and sister came to live in the cave too.

The brother's name was Bark and the little sister was called Beechleaf.

One day when Ab was about ten years old, someone else came to live in the cave.

This was a man who was bent and old.

His hair was grizzled and his beard was short and stiff.

Below his skin robe, one of his legs was twisted and it was shorter than the other.

Mok was a cripple. He could not travel about nor hunt.

But his arms were strong and his fingers were skilful.

He had been a great hunter when he was young.

In fact he had been crippled in a hunt by a fierce cave tiger.

Now he could not hunt, but he could tell wonderful stories of beasts and birds and swimming things.

And best of all he could make stone weapons.

He could make better weapons than any man in the valley.

Therefore each man wanted him to come to live in his cave.

So old Mok had lived first with one and then with another.

But now he had come to spend the rest of his life with his old friend One-Ear.

Ab liked him at once, and Mok grew to love Ab more than anyone else in the world.